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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUCNDSC/DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE
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RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 9079
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5290

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 001022

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [CD](#) [CDG](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#)

SUBJECT: 63RD UNGA/FIRST COMMITTEE (UNFC): DAY SEVEN OF
THEMATIC DEBATE - CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

This is UNFC-8

C1 Day 7 10-22 Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons -
Summary

¶1. (U) Summary: The First Committee on Disarmament and International Security conducted its thematic debate on conventional weapons from October 20 to 22. This cable covers the final day of thematic debate on conventional weapons, October 22. The following states spoke on October 22: Gabon, China, Ecuador, Germany, Canada, Senegal, Kenya, Netherlands, Paraguay, Zambia, Togo, Mexico, Ireland, Iran, and Libya. End Summary.

10/22, Day 7 - Gabon, China, Ecuador, Germany, Canada, Senegal, Kenya, Netherlands, Paraguay, Zambia, Togo, Mexico, Ireland, Iran, and Libya

¶2. (U) Gabon: Praised the 2001 UN PoA on SA/LW and the adoption of an instrument on tracing and marking. It appealed to member states to assist developing states to implement the PoA. Gabon stated that the BMS3 final document bolstered the PoA but that it still contained issues that would need periodic review.

¶3. (U) China: Reiterated its commitment to addressing the issue of cluster munitions and noted its assistance to Asian and African mine clearance projects. China added that it hosted a mine clearance course for personnel from Sudan and provided financial assistance to other states, including Peru and Ecuador. China stated that arms trade is a complicated issue and that states should address the issue in a step-by-step manner within the UN framework and based on the report from the GGE on an ATT. It noted for the first time that it had submitted its military expenditures (for 2007) to the UN reporting instrument.

¶4. (U) Ecuador: Called on states to support the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) to deal with illicit trade in SA/LW and to identify lawful trade to allow states to acquire arms for self-defense. Ecuador stated that it requested an eight-year extension to meet its mine clearance deadline

under the Ottawa Convention. It also stated that it would host a conference on the CMC to address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions.

¶15. (U) Germany: Introduced two draft resolutions, one on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles and surplus, and the other on consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures. Regarding the former, Germany stated that the GGE on that issue had provided guidance to move forward. On the latter, Germany expressed hope that states would adopt it without a vote.

¶16. (U) Senegal: Stated that an ATT should cover the seven categories of arms listed in the UN Register. Senegal argued that elaborating such a treaty would realize General Assembly resolution 61/89 (2006). It stated that the ITI and instrument on illicit brokering should become legally binding. Senegal noted that the Ottawa Convention had broad support from member states and urged other states to accede to it. It also called on states to continue technical and financial assistance in support of de-mining and victim assistance.

¶17. (U) Kenya: Praised the Regional Center in Nairobi for SA/LW to harmonize states' work. It expressed appreciation for states supporting the United Kingdom's resolution on an ATT. Kenya highlighted its hosting of an African regional meeting last September and highlighted the outcome document. The document, it continued, called for an ATT that would encompass all conventional weapons.

¶18. (U) Netherlands: Introduced the draft resolution on transparency in armaments, which it traditionally submits, and stated that it would contribute to confidence and security building. (NOTE: The 1991 transparency in armaments resolution established the UN Register on Conventional Arms. END NOTE). In the capacity of President of the 2007 First Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW Protocol V, it highlighted that states parties would establish a forum to facilitate coordination and cooperation on implementation issues, a database on explosive remnants for requests and needs assessments, and a national reporting mechanism on implementation measures taken.

¶19. (U) Paraguay: Highlighted that it had made advances on the national level in tracking SA/LW and added that civil society played a major role in educating people on improper use of SA/LW. Regarding an ATT, Paraguay stated that it supported a treaty and urged states to use the GGE report recommendations as guidance. It noted that it was a co-sponsor of the draft resolution proposing an ATT open-ended working group.

¶110. (U) Zambia: Stated that it had undertaken measures to implement the UN PoA on SA/LW, such as establishing a focal point for implementation, involving civil society to deal with the issue, and establishing a Fire Arms Act to regulate SA/LW trade. Zambia advocated expanding the scope of SA/LW to include man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS).

¶111. (U) Togo: Facilitated two national workshops in September, one on SA/LW and the other on managing conventional weapons stockpiles. It expressed support for establishing an ATT open-ended working group. Togo welcomed the updating and use of the UN Register and advocated establishing a register for Africa.

¶112. (U) Mexico: On efforts to address illicit trade in SA/LW, Mexico stated that it had seized approximately 37,000 firearms and almost 2,000 grenades in the last two years. It argued that states' efforts to combat SA/LW would be limited until international progress was made. Mexico lamented that a lack of controls in certain states had led to diverting arms to black markets and strengthening organized crime. It reiterated that it preferred starting negotiations on an ATT.

¶113. (U) Ireland: Highlighted its hosting of the Oslo Process negotiations in Dublin and noted that since the UN Secretary

General was the depository for the CMC, a resolution implementing the SYG's responsibilities needed to be adopted.

Ireland emphasized that the proposal did not have any implications for the regular budget since costs would be borne by CMC parties.

¶14. (U) Iran: Stated that there was no urgent need to address arms transfers since the UN Register covers that issue. It lamented that there were few measures to track transfer of aircraft, missiles or tanks. Iran noted that between 60 and 90 percent of deaths were due to small arms. Iran stated that member states should aim to implement the UN PoA on SA/LW, rather than pursuing a separate track. Iran bemoaned that the BMS3 outcome document fell far short of the UN standards, such as transparency and inclusiveness. Iran also complained that millions of dollars in "high-tech" weapons were sent to the "Zionist regime."

¶15. (U) Libya: On mines, it expressed concern that international mechanisms have not addressed the issue in a balanced way (i.e., they exclude the perspective of victim states). It added that the unbalanced approach toward addressing anti-personnel mines placed an embargo on weaker states, precluding them from protecting their borders. Libya added that member states also needed to address rehabilitation of victims and the protection of the environment. It argued that unless member states took those issues into account, some may choose to abstain on related draft resolutions.

Khalilzad